**Washington Latin PCS Contact Information:**

**7th Grade: Ancient Civilizations rwills@latinpcs.org**

**Mr. R. Wills School Phone: 202-223-1111**

**2017-18 School Year**

Throughout this school year, the essential question for this course that all seventh graders will explore is: **“What are the main parts that make up a civilization?”** We will explore the answer to this question through numerous channels, and along the way we will also contemplate answers to these additional questions: **“What does it mean to be civilized?”** and “**What does it mean to be a human being?”** We will also explore a central theme throughout our study of ancient civilizations: **the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.** These questions are the foundation of our Western civilization, and will serve as the focus for every lesson and activity that we will pursue throughout this school year.

**Geography:** A focus will be placed on learning and practicing basic map skills, and defining major land forms and water systems. Students will be expected to learn how to locate specific places throughout the world by measuring lines of longitude and latitude. Also, students will be expected to identify and use cardinal and intermediate directions on a map, and also to identify and use the symbols on a map legend. Also, students will be expected to identify different types of maps: physical, elevation, historical, etc. and to practice how to use each type of map effectively.

**Civilizations:**

This course will focus upon the development of ancient civilizations starting in Mesopotamia. In particular, we will study the achievements of the Sumerians, Babylonians, Assyrians, and the Phoenicians. The primary ancient civilizations to be studied are: Egypt, Greece, and Rome. Throughout our study of each of these ancient civilizations, we will have as one of our goals to define the customs, cultures and traditions established by each of these civilizations.Students will be expected to compare and contrast how each civilization developed: socially, economically, politically, and historically. A special emphasis will be placed on each civilization’s contribution toward: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM), and how these early achievements influenced modern and contemporary civilizations.

**Special Projects:** Throughout this school year, students will have the opportunity to participate in several projects and activities that will enhance our lessons in the classroom. One such activity is called **Document Based Question** (commonly called a **DBQ**), where students will be required to read, analyze, and interpret information using various documents. These documents may include: primary sources, secondary sources, maps, art, political cartoons, and other illustrations. Students will use each of the various documents to answer a series a comprehension questions in writing and discuss their ideas in a forum known as **Socratic Seminars.**

**\*Special Note:** Student participation in Socratic seminars is a vital part of the learning process for this course, and the final grade for each phase of this activity is equal to a test grade. It is strongly encouraged and advised that every student prepare to be fully engaged in this activity so that he or she may reap the full benefits.

Another special project will be the **Model United Nations Conference** where students will have an opportunity to develop skills in public speaking, debating, and leadership. Student participation in this activity is strictly voluntary, and will not have any affect on his or her grade in this course.

\***Special Note:** In preparation for our participation in the Model United Nations Conference and other similar events, it is expected that students will read a daily newspaper, either online or in print, on a regular basis: The Washington Post , The New York Times , USA Today , etc. Students may also choose to read articles on various websites such as: CNN, MSNBC News, the BBC, etc. Occasionally, students will be assigned to locate and bring in to class articles concerning local, national, and international news.

**Literature:** Throughout this school year, students will be required to read various texts related to the particular ancient civilizations that we are studying. For example, during our study of ancient Greece, students will have the opportunity to enjoy reading stories from The Iliad and The Odyssey. Students will also learn about other forms of literature including: poems, short stories, epics, fables, etc. Students will also practice how to analyze nonfictional documents, annotating the readings and composing thoughtful responses to the various readings.

**Writing:** Complementing the literature study, students will be required to complete various writing assignments throughout the school year. Among the various types of writing assignments that will be asked of students are: short stories, essays, journal writing, poetry, and research-based reports.

Throughout this school year, a special emphasis will be placed on learning and practicing various skills using the **MLA Style Guidelines.** In particular, all written work is expected to be follow these guidelines, including daily homework and class work. Students will be required to follow specific guidelines for properly heading their papers, and all written work will be graded accordingly.

**Grading:**

Homework/ Class Assignments (including weekly writing assignments)- 20%

Tests/Projects/Papers- 40%

Quizzes- 25%

Class Participation/Preparation- 15%

**Late Homework:** Students will be assigned homework on a daily basis, and are expected to submit their homework assignments, on time, at the beginning of each class. **With the exception of excused absences from school, late homework will not be accepted.**

**Class Preparation and Participation:** The policy at Washington Latin is that seventh graders are expected to spend approximately 20 minutes each night per subject. Every student receives a daily and weekly grade for class preparation and participation. At minimum, class preparation would include each student having the following materials ready at the beginning of each class:

* A red three-ring binder divided into the required sections: class notes; homework; handouts; tests/quizzes; and writing
* Your Washington Latin Homework Planner
* A pen with either blue or black ink (no other colors)

**Projects:** Throughout the school year, students will be assigned various individual and group long-term projects as enrichment activities for each unit of study. Students who submit a project one-day late will be down-graded by a full letter grade. Any projects submitted two days late will be down-graded by two full letter grades. **Exceptions may be granted for students with excused absences.**

**Agreement**

I have read the following terms and policies stated in this course syllabus and I agree to the expectations as outlined by the teacher of this course, and the expectations of Washington Latin Public Charter School. Students are required to keep a copy of this syllabus in the front of their red three-ring binder for this course.

Please return the signed and dated portion of this form to Mr. Wills no later than Friday, September 29, 2017.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_